

To facilitate routing changes, a telecommunications network (10, 10', 10'') includes a centralized network routing database (28) queried by each ingress switch upon receipt of a call by a calling subscriber (12). In response to the query, the network routing database returns to the querying switch the identity on the next (downstream) switch in the routing path. The querying switch then translates the switch identity to establish the link to that next switch. Because each querying switch makes the necessary translation of the next switch identity to make the link to the next switch, the centralized network database need not concern itself with the particular characteristics of the switch. To make global routing changes, only the network routing database need be updated, not each individual switch.